

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-08

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 EURE-00 SSO-00 INR-05 INRE-00
NSC-05 NSCE-00 CIAE-00 ACDA-10 SP-02 L-01 PM-03
OMB-01 /050 W
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FM AMEMBASSY LONDON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5509
SECDEF WASHDC IMMEDIATE
INFO USMISSION NATO
USCINCEUR
CINCUSAFE

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 LONDON 10516

LIMDIS

DEFENSE FOR ASD/ISA MCGIFFERT AND CSAF

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1
TAGS: UK
SUBJECT: POSSIBLE REACTIVATION OF RAF GREENHAM COMMON

SUMMARY: MULLEY WILL BE ANSWERING IN COMMONS ON 5 JULY
QUESTION ABOUT POSSIBLE REACTIVATION OF RAF GREENHAM
COMMON. MULLEY TOLD AMBASSADOR HMG WILL FACE SOME
POLITICAL FLACK ON REACTIVATION ISSUE BUT WILL MOVE ON
MATTER IF THAT IS OUR DESIRE. SITUATION HERE WOULD BE
EASED IF WASHINGTON DECISION COULD BE MADE NLT 1 JULY
TO ENABLE BRITISH TO MAKE STATEMENT IN COMMONS BEFORE
5 JULY. BRITISH ANXIOUS TO AVOID DENYING REACTIVATION
IF IN FACT WE INTEND TO CHANGE STATUS OF RAF GREENHAM
COMMON. ACTION REQUESTED: WASHINGTON DECISION OR
GUIDANCE NLT 1 JULY. END SUMMARY.

1. AMBASSADOR, ACCOMPANIED BY POL-MIL ATTACHE, PAID
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COURTESY CALL ON MULLEY, SECRETARY OF STATE FOR
DEFENSE, AT HOUSE OF COMMONS ON 15 JUNE. MULLEY WAS IN
GOOD FORM DESPITE HAVING BEEN UP FOR MOST OF NIGHT
WITHOUT SLEEP BECAUSE OF MARATHON COMMONS SESSION
BROUGHT ABOUT BY CONSERVATIVES STRONGLY OPPOSING
GOVERNMENT'S PRICE COMMISSION BILL. MULLEY, ACCOMPANIED
BY FACER, BROUGHT IN SIR FRANK COOPER TO MEET AMBASSADOR

AND JOIN DISCUSSION. DURING DISCUSSION MULLEY EXPRESSED IN LOW-KEY FASHION CONCERN ABOUT POSSIBLE POLITICAL DIFFICULTIES HE MAY FACE ON JULY 5 (DURING ORAL QUESTION TIME IN COMMONS) WHEN HE WILL BE OBLIGED TO ANSWER A QUESTION TABLED BY MCNAIR-WILSON (CONSERVATIVE MP FOR NEWBURY) CONCERNING REACTIVATION OF USAF STAND-BY BASE GREENHAM COMMON.

2. RUMOR IS NOW RIFE IN MCNAIR-WILSON'S CONSTITUENCY THAT USAF INTENDS TO REACTIVATE RAF GREENHAM COMMON. TO DATE, HMG HAS CONSISTENTLY TAKEN LINE, WHEN QUESTIONED, THAT IT DOES NOT KNOW ABOUT REACTIVATION AS USG HAS NOT FORMALLY APPROACHED HMG ON MATTER. HOWEVER, MOD AND FCO OFFICIALS ARE, IN FACT, AWARE OF USAF INTEREST IN REACTIVATION AS CSAF PRIVATELY INFORMED WELLBELOVED (PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY FOR RAF) IN APRIL OF POSSIBLE USAF INTEREST AND INDICATED FORMAL GOVERNMENT-TO-GOVERNMENT REQUEST MIGHT SOON BE FORTHCOMING.

3. SITUATION HERE IS THAT REACTIVATION RUMOR HAS FED LOCAL OPINION AGAINST CHANGE OF STATUS FOR GREENHAM COMMON. MOD OFFICIALS HAVE HEARD THAT AN ACTIVIST GROUP OPPOSING REACTIVATION MAY WELL DEMONSTRATE WHEN RAF BENEVOLENT FUND TATTOO, LIKELY TO DRAW A CROWD OF 250,000, IS HELD AT GREENHAM COMMON ON 25 JUNE.
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MULLEY'S CONCERN IS THAT HE WILL HAVE TO FACE MORE

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 02 LONDON 10516

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POLITICAL FLACK THAN USUAL IF REACTIVATION ISSUE IS
ALLOWED TO GET OUT OF HAND. ALSO, BRITISH OFFICIALS
ARE KEEN TO AVOID TRIGGERING ANTI-NUCLEAR ACTIVISTS
INTO GRABBING ISSUE AND FUELING LOCAL SENTIMENT AGAINST
REACTIVATION.

4. ISSUE FOR BRITISH WOULD BE MOST CONVENIENTLY
SETTLED IF WASHINGTON COULD MAKE DECISION RE REACTIVA-
TION EARLY ENOUGH TO ALLOW HMG TO MAKE STATEMENT IN
HOUSE BEFORE REPEAT BEFORE 5 JULY. LACKING INSTRU-
CTIONS, EMBASSY HAS NOT DISCUSSED ISSUE WITH FCO, BUT
DIPLOMATIC CLEARANCE IF REQUESTED WILL HAVE TO BE
STAFFED THROUGH FCO AND MATTER WILL HAVE TO GO BEFORE
MINISTERS.

5. SINCE STAND TAKEN BY HMG TO MCNAIR-WILSON HAS BEEN
TO REASSURE HIM THAT REACTIVATION WAS NOT CONTEMPLATED,
MULLEY HAS SUGGESTED THAT HIS PROBLEM OF SELLING A
DIFFERENT TUNE WOULD BE EASED IF HE COULD TAKE LINE
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THAT REACTIVATION ISSUE HAS NOW COME UP ANEW UNDER
UMBRELLA OF PRESIDENT CARTER'S REEXAMINATION OF OPTIONS
INVOLVING NATO DEPLOYMENT OF FORCES AND USG NOW HAS
CHANGES IN ITS PLANS WHICH REQUIRE USE OF GREENHAM
COMMON. MOD OFFICIALS STRESS THAT SELLING C-130 AND
KC-130 USE WILL BE SIGNIFICANTLY EASIER IF WE CAN GIVE
SOME ASSURANCE THAT B-52S WILL NOT BE USING THE AIRBASE
ALSO.

6. IN HIS REMARKS TO AMBASSADOR, MULLEY WAS MOST
EMPHATIC ABOUT HMG'S WELCOME OF STATIONING US FORCES
IN UK. HE SAID HE WOULD DO WHAT HE COULD TO CARRY
GREENHAM COMMON THROUGH "IF THAT IS WHAT WE WANT."

7. COMMENT: WE BELIEVE ISSUE WARRANTS IMMEDIATE
ATTENTION AND RECOMMEND EARLY DECISION ONE WAY OR THE
OTHER.

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